

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE

January 30, 2006

3:36 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Thomas Wagoner, Chair
Senator Ralph Seekins, Vice Chair
Senator Ben Stevens
Senator Fred Dyson
Senator Bert Stedman
Senator Kim Elton
Senator Albert Kookesh

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 107(FIN)

"An Act relating to unlawful obstruction or hindrance of hunting, fishing, trapping, or viewing of fish or game; and amending Rule 82, Alaska Rules of Civil Procedure, and Rule 508, Alaska Rules of Appellate Procedure."

MOVED SCS CSHB 107(RES) OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 269

"An Act relating to contribution actions relating to the release of a hazardous substance; and providing for an effective date."

MOVED HB 269 OUT OF COMMITTEE

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 251(RES)

"An Act authorizing the Board of Fisheries to adopt regulations regarding fishing by a person who holds two entry permits for a salmon fishery."

MOVED SCS CSHB 251(RES) OUT OF COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL NO. 166

"An Act relating to an annual wildlife conservation tag; relating to bond requirements for vendors of fish and game licenses, permits, and tags; and providing for an effective date."

HEARD AND HELD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 107

SHORT TITLE: HUNTING/FISHING INTERFERENCE

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) RAMRAS

01/24/05 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/24/05 (H) RES, JUD
02/02/05 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 124
02/02/05 (H) Heard & Held
02/02/05 (H) MINUTE(RES)
02/09/05 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 124
02/09/05 (H) Heard & Held
02/09/05 (H) MINUTE(RES)
02/16/05 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 124
02/16/05 (H) Moved CSHB 107(RES) Out of Committee
02/16/05 (H) MINUTE(RES)
02/18/05 (H) RES RPT CS(RES) NT 3DP 1DNP 4NR
02/18/05 (H) DP: OLSON, ELKINS, RAMRAS;
02/18/05 (H) DNP: SEATON;
02/18/05 (H) NR: GATTO, LEDOUX, CRAWFORD, KAPSNER
02/18/05 (H) FIN REFERRAL ADDED AFTER JUD
03/02/05 (H) JUD AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 120
03/02/05 (H) Heard & Held
03/02/05 (H) MINUTE(JUD)
03/04/05 (H) JUD AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 120
03/04/05 (H) Moved CSHB 107(JUD) Out of Committee
03/04/05 (H) MINUTE(JUD)
03/07/05 (H) JUD RPT CS(JUD) NT 3DP 3NR
03/07/05 (H) DP: GRUENBERG, ANDERSON, MCGUIRE;
03/07/05 (H) NR: DAHLSTROM, COGHILL, GARA
03/15/05 (H) FIN AT 1:30 PM HOUSE FINANCE 519
03/15/05 (H) Moved CSHB 107(FIN) Out of Committee
03/15/05 (H) MINUTE(FIN)
03/16/05 (H) FIN RPT CS(FIN) NT 2DP 6NR
03/16/05 (H) DP: HAWKER, STOLTZE;
03/16/05 (H) NR: WEYHRAUCH, CROFT, MOSES, KELLY,
MEYER, CHENAULT
05/08/05 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)
05/08/05 (H) VERSION: CSHB 107(FIN)
05/09/05 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
05/09/05 (S) RES, JUD
01/23/06 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
01/23/06 (S) Heard & Held
01/23/06 (S) MINUTE(RES)
01/30/06 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: HB 269

SHORT TITLE: HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE RELEASE LIABILITY

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) RAMRAS

04/14/05 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/14/05 (H) RES, JUD
04/22/05 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 124
04/22/05 (H) Scheduled But Not Heard
04/25/05 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 124
04/25/05 (H) Moved Out of Committee
04/25/05 (H) MINUTE(RES)
04/26/05 (H) RES RPT 4DP 2NR
04/26/05 (H) DP: OLSON, LEDOUX, ELKINS, RAMRAS;
04/26/05 (H) NR: GATTO, CRAWFORD
04/27/05 (H) JUD AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 120
04/27/05 (H) Moved Out of Committee
04/27/05 (H) MINUTE(JUD)
04/28/05 (H) JUD RPT 6DP
04/28/05 (H) DP: KOTT, ANDERSON, DAHLSTROM, COGHILL,
GARA, MCGUIRE
04/30/05 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)
04/30/05 (H) VERSION: HB 269
05/01/05 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
05/01/05 (S) RES, JUD
01/23/06 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
01/23/06 (S) Heard & Held
01/23/06 (S) MINUTE(RES)
01/30/06 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: HB 251

SHORT TITLE: COMMERCIAL FISHING MULTIPLE PERMIT HOLDER

SPONSOR(s): REPRESENTATIVE(s) SAMUELS

04/05/05 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/05/05 (H) FSH, RES
04/11/05 (H) FSH RPT 3DP 1NR
04/11/05 (H) DP: WILSON, HARRIS, ELKINS;
04/11/05 (H) NR: THOMAS
04/11/05 (H) FSH AT 8:30 AM CAPITOL 124
04/11/05 (H) Moved Out of Committee
04/11/05 (H) MINUTE(FSH)
04/11/05 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 124
04/11/05 (H) Scheduled But Not Heard
04/20/05 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 124
04/20/05 (H) -- Meeting Canceled --
04/22/05 (H) RES AT 1:00 PM CAPITOL 124
04/22/05 (H) Moved CSHB 251(RES) Out of Committee
04/22/05 (H) MINUTE(RES)

04/25/05 (H) RES RPT CS(RES) 4DP 2NR
04/25/05 (H) DP: ELKINS, LEDOUX, RAMRAS, SAMUELS;
04/25/05 (H) NR: OLSON, CRAWFORD
04/29/05 (H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)
04/29/05 (H) VERSION: CSHB 251(RES)
05/01/05 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
05/01/05 (S) RES
01/25/06 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205
01/25/06 (S) Heard & Held
01/25/06 (S) MINUTE(RES)
01/30/06 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

BILL: SB 166

SHORT TITLE: WILDLIFE CONSERVATION TAG
SPONSOR(s): SENATOR(s) BUNDE

04/08/05 (S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
04/08/05 (S) RES, FIN
01/30/06 (S) RES AT 3:30 PM BUTROVICH 205

WITNESS REGISTER

JIM POUND

Staff to Representative Jay Ramras
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

POSITION STATEMENT: Commented on HB 107 for the sponsor.

TIM BENINTENDI

Staff to Representative Ralph Samuels
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported SCS CSHB 251(RES), Version I.

REPRESENTATIVE JAY RAMRAS

Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of HB 269.

JANE PIERSON

Staff to Representative Jay Ramras
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions on HB 269 for the sponsor.

SENATOR CON BUNDE

Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
POSITION STATEMENT: Sponsor of SB 166.

LAUREN RICE
Staff to Senator Bunde
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions on SB 166 for the sponsor.

JOHN PAGE
Seward AK
POSITION STATEMENT: Opposed SB 166.

DAN MCDONALD
Seward AK
POSITION STATEMENT: Opposed SB 166.

KIM KIRBY
Southeast Sea Kayaks
Ketchikan AK
POSITION STATEMENT: Opposed SB 166.

CHUCK SLAGLE
Baranof Skiff Excursions
Ketchikan AK
POSITION STATEMENT: Opposed SB 166.

STAN STEPHENS
Stan Stephens Charters
Valdez AK
POSITION STATEMENT: Opposed SB 166.

SCOTT REISLAND
Denali Grizzly Bear Resort
Alaska Campground Owners Association
Fairbanks AK
POSITION STATEMENT: Opposed SB 166.

RON PECK, President
Alaska Travel Industry
Anchorage AK
POSITION STATEMENT: Opposed SB 166.

ACTION NARRATIVE

CHAIR THOMAS WAGONER called the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting to order at [3:36:51 PM](#). Present were Senators Kim Elton, Albert Kookesh, Bert Stedman, Ralph Seekins, Fred Dyson and Chair Thomas Wagoner.

^#HB107

CSHB 107(FIN)-HUNTING/FISHING INTERFERENCE

CHAIR THOMAS WAGONER announced CSHB 107(FIN) to be up for consideration.

JIM POUND, staff to Representative Jay Ramras, sponsor of HB 107, recapped that a proposed amendment from Senator Ben Stevens took care of last week's concerns about commercial fishing and cruise ships.

[3:39:36 PM](#)

CHAIR WAGONER asked if there were any objections to Amendment 1 as follows:

24-LS0444\I.1
Kane
2/16/06

A M E N D M E N T 1

OFFERED IN THE SENATE
TO: CSHB 107(RES)

BY SENATOR BEN STEVENS

Page 2, lines 20 - 21:

Delete ", other than an action relating to commercial fishing,"

Without objection, Amendment 1 was adopted.

[3:40:40 PM](#)

SENATOR RALPH SEEKINS asked what happens if he is photographing a trophy bull moose and someone comes along and shoots it. He asked, "Wouldn't the hunter be interfering with my viewing purpose at that point?"

MR. POUND replied that the question of intent would be asked at that time, but he also thought that taking pictures in the middle of hunting season would be a good way to get shot.

[3:41:11 PM](#)

SENATOR BEN STEVENS arrived.

SENATOR SEEKINS asked if this measure would create a conflict between the dueling purposes of hunting and fishing. He also asked which purpose would prevail if two people were equally disturbing to each other.

MR. POUND replied that he thought it possible that the hunter would prevail in that instance, since he has a license stating he can hunt at a specific time.

SENATOR SEEKINS said he wanted to avoid conflicts and he wanted to know how intent could be established.

MR. POUND replied that that language is currently in statute.

SENATOR SEEKINS remarked that "reasonable actual attorneys fees" are talked about in the bill.

MR. POUND clarified that language in the bill breaks down the award according to what the agreement is. It could be as low as 10 percent.

CHAIR WAGONER pointed out that two people could get in a conflict over shooting the same animal, also.

[3:47:10 PM](#)

SENATOR SEEKINS moved to pass SCS CSHB 107(RES) from committee with attached fiscal note and individual recommendations. There were no objections and it was so ordered.

#

[3:48:48 PM](#) at ease [3:50:28 PM](#)

^#HB269

HB 269-HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE RELEASE LIABILITY

CHAIR THOMAS WAGONER announced HB 269 to be up for consideration.

SENATOR BERT STEDMAN said he wanted his question answered if all the owners of the property had joint and several liability.

JANE PIERSON, staff to Representative Jay Ramras, answered that HB 269 contains joint and several liability language.

SENATOR SEEKINS moved to pass HB 269 from committee with individual recommendations and the attached zero fiscal note. There were no objections and it was so ordered.

#

[3:52:27 PM](#) at ease [3:54:41 PM](#)

^#HB251

CSHB 251(RES)-COMMERCIAL FISHING MULTIPLE PERMIT HOLDER

CHAIR THOMAS WAGONER announced CSHB 251(RES) to be up for consideration.

SENATOR SEEKINS moved to adopt SCS CSHB 251(RES), Version I, as the working document. There were no objections and it was so ordered.

SENATOR ELTON objected for discussion purposes.

TIM BENINTENDI, staff to Representative Ralph Samuels, sponsor of HB 251, said the sponsor supported the CS. It streamlines and clarifies the language and, as a result, the bill has more support.

SENATOR SEEKINS remarked that the CS would allow an additional fishing opportunity, but not for using additional or modified gear or being at additional times or areas.

MR. BENINTENDI replied that on the contrary, it allows for any or all of those additional privileges.

CHAIR WAGONER reiterated that it just gives the board the authority.

[3:58:03 PM](#)

SENATOR BEN STEVENS thanked the sponsor for considering his requests from the last meeting. Together they found that all of the items listed in the original bill are already under the authority of the Board of Fisheries in AS 16.05.251. The CS just gives the board the authority to allow for boats with two permits.

[3:59:39 PM](#)

Senator Elton removed his objection and SCS CSHB 251(RES), version I, was adopted.

[3:59:53 PM](#)

SENATOR SEEKINS moved SCS CSHB 251(RES) from committee with individual recommendations and attached fiscal note. There were no objections and it was so ordered.

#

[4:01:01 PM](#) at ease [4:03:24 PM](#)

^#SB166

SB 166-WILDLIFE CONSERVATION TAG

CHAIR THOMAS WAGONER announced SB 166 to be up for consideration.

SENATOR CON BUNDE, sponsor of SB 166, said it is a simple bill. He related that hunters and fishers are becoming a minority in the enjoyment of Alaska's wildlife, but they have borne nearly the entire cost of Alaska Department of Fish and Game's (ADF&G) management of wildlife and sport fisheries. SB 166 creates a system for those who commercially view wildlife on a tour to step up to the plate and make a contribution by buying a \$5 annual wildlife conservation tag.

He said that some people don't want wildlife viewers to contribute because then they could have a seat at the table, but that horse is out of the barn. He explained that the tourism industry already has proposals before the Boards of Fisheries and Game and has asked the Division of Wildlife to manage the resources for viewing opportunities. Other people are concerned about getting taxed for just opening their eyes and looking around, but that's not the case. The bill exempts people under 16 and over 60 who don't have to pay for other licenses. Other people have told him they want to be responsible and contribute to the management of wildlife.

The funds received from the sale of the tags are intended to be used for management programs that directly benefit the tag purchasers and thereby alleviating the pressure on the ADF&G to use hunter and angler dollars for non-consumptive programs. It would support constructing wildlife viewing infrastructure, boardwalks, improving access, developing roadside interpretive signs and other educational programs generally fostering viewer-related economic development. The intent of this bill is to provide services to travelers and tourists that enhance their opportunity to view wildlife thus enhancing the tourist industry. Alaska had 1.5 million tourists last year and 53 percent of Alaskans go out of their way to watch wildlife; 74 percent want to know more about where and how to see it.

[4:10:17 PM](#)

A federal program, called Teaming With Wildlife, has been endorsed by over 400 Alaskan business and organizations. It has produced about \$3 million in federal funding for non-traditional non-hunting programs.

[4:11:54 PM](#)

SENATOR BERT STEDMAN asked what the difference is between this bill and a cruise ship head tax bill.

SENATOR BUNDE replied that SB 166 would include everyone who uses some commercial enterprise to view Alaska wildlife.

[4:12:52 PM](#)

SENATOR RALPH SEEKINS asked if the funds generated by this tax would help garner federal matching funds.

SENATOR BUNDE replied yes.

SENATOR SEEKINS said that the Fish and Game Fund in AS 16.05.130 says that money coming in from hunting licenses, tags and fees, plus the Pitman Roberts and Dingle Hatch funds, shall be allocated by the department to programs intended to directly benefit license purchasers of general hunting, trapping and fishing licenses and asked if this measure was a counter balance. Would the money collected from this tag be used for programs that are not for the direct benefit of the hunters, fishers and trappers.

SENATOR BUNDE replied that would be a fair characterization, but added that most hunters are also wildlife viewers.

[4:15:37 PM](#)

SENATOR SEEKINS said the conflict is there; hunters object to spending funds only on programs that don't benefit them directly.

[4:16:32 PM](#)

SENATOR BUNDE added that his intent is to allow those who do not purchase hunting licenses to contribute to the management of fish and wildlife resources and that would appear to be a counter balance.

[4:16:52 PM](#)

SENATOR KIM ELTON asked how transportation language on page 2, line 2, would affect the ski lifts at Girdwood or Eaglecrest

where transportation is provided to the top of the slope in a setting where one may have an opportunity to view wildlife.

SENATOR BUNDE replied that it is not his intent to impact ski lift operations where seeing wildlife is incidental. However, he would target a flight seeing tour or any other number of commercial ventures that have wildlife viewing as a goal.

[4:18:22 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON asked how it would impact situations in Juneau where people purchase tickets on a vessel to view whales that aren't managed by the state. He asked if it is a stretch to collect a fee to view federally managed marine mammals.

SENATOR BUNDE replied they could see other state wildlife.

SENATOR ELTON said he is bothered by collecting fees that don't find their way back to that specific use - like state park fees that often don't go back to maintenance of state parks and business license fees that may cost \$200, but don't go back to the Department of Commerce. He asked how much would really go back.

SENATOR BUNDE deferred that answer to the commissioner of Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), but his experience has been that duck stamp fees have found their way back to the intentioned area.

[4:21:13 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON asked if he considered taking the Alaska Railroad from his home in Anchorage to Seward, would he get charged.

SENATOR BUNDE replied that he wouldn't get charged for traveling to and from a residence.

SENATOR ELTON asked if you get to Seward and take a whale-watching vessel and buy a tag, would you get a credit for that \$5 when you buy your hunting license and duck stamp in the fall.

SENATOR BUNDE replied that you have to buy a hunting license first to not have to pay the wildlife conservation fee.

[4:23:42 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON asked if a commercial transporter would have any liability if he doesn't ask for proof of a tag.

LAUREN RICE, staff to Senator Bunde, replied that a provider of the service is not penalized, but if a person knowingly fails to purchase a wildlife conservation tag, he is treated the same as a hunter hunting without a license, a Class A misdemeanor with a fine up to \$300.

SENATOR ELTON said he wanted a definitive answer on whether a provider has liability.

[4:25:14 PM](#)

SENATOR SEEKINS asked if he has a hunting license, does he have to buy another tag.

SENATOR BUNDE replied no, if you have an Alaska hunting license, you are exempt.

CHAIR WAGONER asked if someone who is over 60 years old and has a permanent license is exempt from purchasing this tag.

SENATOR BUNDE replied yes.

SENATOR STEDMAN asked why the Alaska Marine Highway System was excluded since people use it as a cruise ship in the summer.

SENATOR BUNDE said he did not intend to charge people who just drive on the highway or take the Alaska Marine Highway, but he offered to entertain an amendment if Senator Stedman wanted to include them.

[4:27:29 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON said he thought the language meant that people riding the Alaska Marine Highway would be charged unless they were traveling to or from their home.

SENATOR BUNDE referenced language on page 3, line 12, that focused on people traveling to and from their residence, but it appears that tourists would not be exempt from purchasing a tag.

MS. RICE added that a person who could prove he was traveling to or from his home would be exempt on the Marine Highway. Non-residents would have to pay as would residents who would be taking a leisure trip.

[4:29:58 PM](#)

SENATOR STEDMAN asked if a spouse who travels with an individual with a hunting license has to pay the fee.

MS. RICE replied yes.

SENATOR BUNDE pointed out that this tag is a yearly purchase.

SENATOR ELTON said he needed clarification that a person traveling on the Alaska Railroad or the Marine Highway from Haines to Juneau to shop for food didn't have to pay a fee.

CHAIR BUNDE suggested that the \$5 fee would not be noticeable on top of a \$300 or \$400 ferry ticket.

MS. RICE added if an individual was going from his home to another destination, he would technically be exempt.

[4:32:55 PM](#)

JOHN PAGE, Seward, said he thought this tax would disproportionately impact smaller businesses like his. He is a tour provider and his tours are priced less than those booked on a tour ship. He was concerned about how the program would be administered because many visitors to the state do multiple tours and they often use online booking or calling on a phone, which would make verification difficult. He also asked how they would guarantee that the money would be channeled back to conservation and if a board would oversee how those monies would be spent. Finally, he asked for an estimate of how many dollars this program would generate.

CHAIR WAGONER answered that it should generate \$4.6 million to \$5.8 million between FY 2007 and FY 2012.

[4:36:52 PM](#)

CHAIR BUNDE explained that an individual must have a tag in order to not be assessed another fee.

DAN MCDONALD, Seward, opposed SB 166 because it targets tourism. It would put smaller tour operators at a disadvantage to the more expensive ones. He mentioned that all tour operators currently have to deal with the price of fuel going up and the state is benefiting from the price of fuel going up. The \$5 fee seems to be unreasonable once administration of it is accounted for, he didn't see much of it going to actually promote conservation.

KIM KIRBY, Southeast Sea Kayaks, opposed SB 166 because it targets visitors and residents alike. She thought that Alaska would do irreparable harm to its image by taxing wildlife viewing. People already pay a premium to get up here and to live

here and the state is trying to encourage visitors. She was also concerned that as a small business owner, the onus will fall on her to police the system, which might require hiring another person.

LEN LAURANCE said he represented Alaska Rainforest Sanctuary, Inter Island Ferry Authority (IFA) and Taquan Air. He noticed that the Alaska Marine Highway, as a public entity, is exempt from bond requirements, but SB 166 treats the IFA differently. The \$5 fee would have a negative impact on the revenues of the IFA, which is not subsidized and is totally dependent on the revenues it generates to cover operating costs.

He said the Alaska Rainforest Sanctuary is a privately operated 30-acre nature preserve on the Ketchikan road system. He asked how this bill would apply to this kind of private tour property.

The third business he represents is Taquan Air, a local flight seeing operator and he asked if this fee would apply to Misty Fjords Flight Seeing that focuses on scenic wonders and not wildlife viewing. Taquan also has viewing trips where people actually land and take a trail into the Tongass National Forest. Taquan Air pays a per person user fee to the U.S. Forest Service for that use. He asked if this would add another fee to that activity. He concluded saying:

Instead of improving tourism, this legislation would tend to kill the goose that lays the golden egg. It would also be an administrative nightmare from a tour operator's point of view.

[4:45:22 PM](#)

CHAIR WAGONER noted that when people are viewing wildlife on the Rainforest Sanctuary, the wildlife is not privately owned.

MR. LAURANCE responded that they wouldn't be classified as wildlife. They have a half dozen reindeer that were purchased and those require a permit to be kept. The guests also view Alaskan reindeer, which are not wild.

CHAIR WAGONER asked if they are supplying domesticated animals.

MR. LAURANCE added that they are not supplying the eagles, because they just come and go.

[4:47:06 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON related that some interpretations of federal law say you can't apply a sales tax to flight seeing operations in which a plane takes off and lands at one location and he thought the sponsor might want to consider.

SENATOR BUNDE responded that if the Misty Fjords' advertisement mentions wildlife, this fee would certainly apply. He has also lived in Ketchikan and knows Misty Fjords and, "You'd have to be blind in one eye and not be able to see out of the other to travel that area and not see Alaska wildlife." He was not sure how a \$5 charge that only applies to non-residents and residents not coming to and from their home would put them under water.

He thought revenue from this tag would really enhance the state's support for tourism, because, in his view, this industry returns so little to the general fund now that's it's hard to justify increased state investment in it.

SENATOR STEDMAN said he wanted a definitive answer on how it would apply to the Inter Island Ferry and other aviation enterprises.

[4:50:01 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON informed the committee that the Inter Island Ferry is not a part of the Alaska Marine Highway and therefore has no exemption from bonding.

[4:50:53 PM](#)

CHUCK SLAGLE, Baranof Skiff Excursions, said that \$5 does make a difference to his profit margin. "It's nothing more than a head tax with a different name on it." He said this state is getting a reputation for greed and asked, "Where does it stop?" He said the one-day fishing license fee was raised from \$10 to \$20 this year. That is a 100 percent increase so that a grayling hatchery could be built in Fairbanks and he didn't know how much would be eaten up by a new bureaucracy to manage it.

STAN STEVENS, Stan Stephens Charters, opposed SB 166. He was against targeted taxes. He wanted to see an income or sales tax, because they would show how valuable tourism is to this state. He also agreed with others that this would be an administrative nightmare. He runs a daily average of 300 people through his business and none of them are from tour ships. They are independent travelers or mostly Alaskans.

SCOTT REISLAND, Denali Grizzly Bear Resort, said he is also representing the Alaska Campground Owners Association. They were

both concerned about this bill's impact on the RV industry and the fly and drive rental businesses. It was unclear that they would be included or exempted. It would be difficult for him to pull everyone out of their RVs to make sure they have a stamp and would require him to hire one other person.

[4:59:22 PM](#)

He mentioned that some visitors to Denali Park don't see animals for different reasons and that a \$5 user fee is about 20 percent of the cost of the fee at the San Diego Zoo where people are guaranteed to see animals.

[5:00:24 PM](#)

CHAIR WAGONER said he didn't know of anyone marketing a trip or wildlife viewing tour that mentions how much sales tax or fees are included. He asked Mr. Reiland if he markets his packages that way.

MR. REISLAND responded that he breaks down his costs in his marketing.

[5:01:05 PM](#)

SENATOR BUNDE responded that RV parks are not included in SB 166. He pointed out that hunters and fishers buy a license to hunt, but not a license to kill or to catch. Hunters go away disappointed, as well. He emphasized that buying a wildlife viewing tag is paying for an opportunity to attempt to view, not a guarantee. The vendors get \$1 a piece for every one of the tags they sell to cover their administrative costs.

[5:01:57 PM](#)

SENATOR ELTON said the argument could be made that someone who rents an RV is a provider of commercial transportation.

SENATOR BUNDE thanked him for pointing that out and he added that he thought this tag would be mainly self-policed and that he has received emails from tourists saying they would be happy to pay an extra \$5 to have a bigger voice in conservation management.

[5:03:26 PM](#)

RON PECK, President, Alaska Travel Industry, agreed with previous testimony in opposition to SB 166 regarding application, reputation, implementation, execution and administration. He noted the exemption for RV users who regularly see wildlife and questioned how trams that are operated in the summer would be affected. The one at Alyeska

costs \$16 right now and he has frequently seen black bears on that trip. He questioned how people riding the Marine Highway or the Alaska Railroad would be affected and how a penalty would be assessed to a non-stamp holder.

[5:08:23 PM](#)

CHAIR WAGONER announced that SB 166 would be held for further testimony on February 6 and adjourned the meeting at [5:09:19 PM](#).

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